TWO WANDERING BITS

How the Southern Coroner Came to His Decision.

Justice Vindicated by Original Rules of Evidence-Story of the Meanest Man.

It was an easy matter to get a coroner's jury at Big Hatchie crossing. Gabe Simpson, for stealing cotton after sundown, had been hanged without expensive legal formalities. All day long the body creaked in the slight wind. His widow had viewed the remains, and while her heart had always been true to Gabe, the poignancy of grief prompted her to throw her arms around Parson Meadowriver's neck. Mrs. Meadowriver was duly restrained by neighbors who sympathized with Mrs. Simpson in her trouble.

"Come," squeaked old 'Squire Dinwiddie, who had come down from the county seat, "I've got to hold this heavh inquest befo" sundown; all you ah willin' to se've the State of Mississippi with fee, stand on this side of these heavh hoe handles."

Fourteen cleared the stack of hoe handles and in short order twelve of the volunteers were sworn, also the widow of the man up on the tree and seven darkeys who were, quite fortunately, five miles away at the time of the affair. The witnesses all swore that they had known the deceased for many years, and all admitted that he might have stolen the cotton in question. The evidence was all one way. It would have been much better for the man being tried to have thrown himself on the mercy of the court. But he remained silent.

"It is cleahly conclusive that Gabe Simpson stole this heavh cotten, altho' his silence should have no weight again' him," seriously snapped the 'Squire, "Howeveh, I am not prepahed to say that he is guilty, because in that case the defendant would be taxed the costs in the proceedin's. The findin' is again' the State, and the costs ah assessed accordin'ly."

The widow seemed to find a measure of relief and consolation in this verdict, although she was loath to release the parson. "Now as to the cause of death," con-

tinued the 'Squire; "in all mattahs of this kind, the evidence is necessai'ly ex pahte. The prisonah has no oppo'tunity to defend himself. (Coahoma county vs. Absalom White.) Cause is subsequential to effect, Always. As the ju'y is summoned aftah the act, its scope is consequential. Always. Thehfo' it is plain that this ju'y can examine no fu'theh into the cause than appeahs in the evidence befo' it. I should say the deceased came to his death from strangulation. Think so, Kunnel?"

The colonel twisted his tongue around his bad tooth and then untwisted it with a smack before answering.

"Reckon that's the law on 't," said the colonel. "'N reckon bettah get a doctah's opinion on cause of death."

The doctor thought undue excitement might be assigned in a case of the kind. Morgan Hoop, the saw mill man from Massachusetts, was on the jury. He suggested that the jury write out its verdict and find the cause of death without unnecessary interference. Upon this hint the jury caucussed. The saw mill man with his Northern energy had the verdict prepared in two minutes. As submitted it read:
"We, the jury, find that Gabe Simpson's death was caused by suspended animation, and that he was afterward duly acquitted of cotten stealing from parties living in the Yallabusha bottoms."

The 'Squire mused awhile and then mum-"Reckon that will do. And as I undah-stand it gentlemen, this does not exempt Gabe's brothah from prosecution fo' stealin'

A low darkey on the outskirts of the crowd was seen to stealthily slip away toward the live oak swamp. Then the body was cut down.

When Spigger came to hold cases on the Express he had to borrow from the father of the chapel to buy a meal ticket. The first night in the composing-room he grabbed three cuts of pie and a sandwich before the autocrat of the lunch baskets had time to examine his credentials. The lunch man gave him credit the rest of the week, for fear he would lose the amount of the first night's bill if he refused him further food. Spigger had a good string the first week, cashed it, paid his lunch bill, asked the father of the chapel for further time on the meal ticket favor, and then got boiling drunk. This was by no means sensational. The second week was largely ditto, the third week likewise, and the fourth showed no departure from the custom which the newcomer was establishing. The father of the chapel, gray-bearded and indulgent old man that he was, only looked over the rims of his steel spectacles when Spigger took his envelope from the foreman on Monday. About a month after the appearance of Spigger the father casually asked him if he was still using that meal ticket. Thereupon Spigger immediately turned over a ticket good yet for 80 cents' worth of food, and paid the aged gentleman a balance of \$2.70. The story went the rounds of the composing-room before the news editors down stairs had sent up "thirty."

Spigger was unusually lucky, either at "jeffing" or playing poker, and he kept the younger printers continually in a state of financial despondency. They could not borrow from him, either. He exacted the cash for every call at the poker table, and no one could even owe for a moment in a jack pot in which Spigger was interested. Finally he took to Shylocking, loaning a dollar at 20 per cent. interest for a week, or \$5 at 10 per cent. interest for two days or for a week. He bought no new clothes. only squandered a few dollars in getting drunk, kept his laundry bill scrupulously low by instinct, and in all laid by money

It began to be rumored that he was going to marry his landlady, but this proved to be a canard, because she soon ordered him to move, giving a very petulant reason for the notice. She found him blacking his shoes one day with a clothes brush she had provided. The boys in the office resolved to give him a lesson for the shabby trick he had played on the father of the chapel, and, according to the eternal fitness of things, they decided to let him pay for a good supper, of which a dozen or more should partake. He apparently fell in the trap, went with the boys to a strange restaurant that had been designedly selected by the ring leader in the scheme, and was contentedly eating away, as he thought, at the expense of one of the compositors whom, he was told, was about to desert the ranks of the celibates. The idea was to have the boys slip away one by one on some pretext or other and leave the stingy man to pay the bill or get kicked out of the place. It worked all right until the fourth man got away. Spigger caught a whiff of the mouse. He suddenly jumped from the table and bolted out of the door. The clerk could not have stopped him if he had tried. Several started after him, and all got away except little Harry Carter, who was a consumptive. The clerk chalked up the amount of the bill on Harry's face. Harry's condition after this experience necessitated a trip to Texas, and the boys had to pay a good sum to get him there. Spigger remarked afterwards that the sup-per was one of the best he had ever eaten, although he had to run to catch his last car

Drink led to the temporary downfall of this mean man. He had been arrested once or twice, out each time he made what the boys call a "spiel" to the police judge and was released. Again he was arrested and again told the court that he was still a valuable employe of the greatest paper on earth. He was about to leave the dock when a spruce youth, who had been a witness in another case, stepped up and told the court that he could unfold a tale about the prisoner, who was about to walk out of the dock. This witness was a waiter in a restaurant. He told the story of Spigger's

escape from the restaurant. "That is enough," bawled the court. "Thirty days in the workhouse." And there Spigger went. He sent numerous appeals to the office, but the boys sent him facetious notes in reply. One note urged him to put on a sub, another asked him if he was keeping a string on his time. Finally he was released. That man's luck did not forsake him. While at the workhouse he found that one of the prisoners was a man wanted in Pennsylvania for murdering a man for money. Of course, you suppose that he told the authorities. Not he. He waited until that man's time was up, took him in as a roommate, wrote and discovered there was a reward over the head of the murderer and then turned him over to Perhaps you think people shunned him as treacherous man after that. Not they. Buddhists and Mussulmans.

The newspapers printed his picture and said he had accomplished a skillful piece of detective work. That was just his luck. He opened up a saloon immediately, and laid the foundation of a fortune on his reputation as the capturer of a famous murderer. The father of the chapel still has the unused portion of the meal ticket. GAVIN L. PAYNE.

OFFERINGS OF THE POETS.

My Dog and I. My gun in hand, the eye alert, My faithful dog in sight, O'er wood and field I gaily roam In rapturous delight. On grasses gray the frost is seen, On stubble-field and corn. And scattered lie the rustling leaves, From bush and branches shorn.

The air is crisp, a hawk, perhaps, Is soaring in the sky. And cawing crows on forage bent Pass slowly flying by. Through shocks of corn the wheat is seen, Each shock a toiler's crown;

The barren trees look ghostly now, The weeds are broken down. The woodbine and the sumac yet Their crimson banners fly, And often yet a violet Belated, greets my eye.

A fragrance sweet from bog and marsh Comes wafting through the air, Far sweeter than from mignonette Combined with roses fair.

And beating thus through wood and dale, Expectant, up and down, A thousand wonders do I find In wood and stubble brown. Where suddenly, as if transformed,

Points head erect, a picture grand, As if from marble hewn. To ho! To ho! my canine friend, I warning lift the hand; The blood leaps tingling in my veins, As I expectant stand.

My dog admiring, proud and stanch-

My dog, where leaves are strewn,

Then flush the hiding quail, Pick off a bird, perhaps a pair, As to the wood they sail. And so the day with nature spent On hillside and in dale, I take delight, my dog and I, To seek the fleeting quail.

-Otto Stechhan.

Sea Shells-A Lullaby. Oh, the murmur of the sea shells Is the mem'ry of the song The mermaids crooned while combing

So hush thee, my baby, So rest thee, my dear, And the songs moaning in from the sea Shall woo thee away,

Where the mists off the spray Soon will hide baby's bright eyes from me, Where the tangled, blurred mist Swaying, soft and sea-kissed,

Drifts away to the land of To-bel Oh, the pink upon the faces Of the laughing shells o' sea Is a blush the rosy mermaids Left them as a legacy! So sleep, my sweet baby,

Out their silken hair so long!

Have never a fear, And the pink of the shells o' the sea Thy soft cheeks will flush With the mermaid's own blush, When the dream waves bring baby to me.

Yes, the dream waves will break And my babe gently wake As they lap on the shores of To-be! -Mary Hockett-Flanner. Indianapolis.

To a Western Singer. (James Newton Matthews.) Bard of our Western world!-its prairies wide,

With edging woods, lost creeks and hidden ways; Its isolated farms, with roundelays Of orchard warblers heard on every side;

Its crossroad schoolhouse, wherein still Thy fondest memories, since there thy

First fell on classic verse, and thou, in Of that, didst find thine own song glorified. So singing, smite the strings and counterchange

The lucently melodious drippings of Thy happy harp from airs of "Tempe To chirp and thrill of lowliest flight and

In praise of our To-day, and home and Thou meadowlark no less than night--James Whitcomb Riley.

Triolets. There are only two tragedies in life-not getting what you want, and getting it The last is the worse.-Oscar Wilde in "Lady Windermere's Fan."

FRED. I've married Madge, though I loved Jean-But she was false and Madge is true.

Away with this passionate, vain regret! I've married Madge, though I loved Jean-

Aye, loved her well-and I love her yet! Oh, why were her eyes so sweetly blue? I've married Madge, though I loved Jean-

But she was false-dear Madge is true! JEANNETTE. I'm Cyril's wife, and I flouted Fred-Poor Fred, who worshiped me all in vain! For Cyril had won my heart instead: I married Cyril and flouted Fred.

Strange, fascination's so quickly fled! Would I had Fred's dear love again! I'm Cyril's wife, and I flouted Fred-Poor Fred, who worshiped me all in vain! -Stella Weiler. Hamilton, O.

Dear Winter Comes. The Sun along his southern road Has hurried this brief day, And, dipping now his cheerless disk, Sends back a farewell ray.

Sweeping the strings of forest harps, A sad, yet sweet, refrain The dying breezes play. I know Drear Winter comes again. -R. H. Richards.

Spencer, Ind.

BUDDHIST BIGOTRY.

Sick Lasears Prefer Death to Food Prepared by Christians.

Philadelphia Press. The British ship Lanark arrived in port two days ago. Yesterday the physician from the British consulate went aboard to examine the crew. Three-fourths are Lascars, shipped in Bombay. The doctor found six suffering from heart affection and two from other diseases. The two last were in a serious condition. The doctor, through an interpreter, told one he must be re-moved to a hospital. The crew gathered around the physician and uttered furious protests. The sick man said he would die rather than leave the ship and his country-

A Lascar eats nothing but food prepared by a countryman; a Christian touching it would cause contamination, and anyone partaking of it after this defilement loses caste. This was why the sick man preferred death to leaving the vessel. He consented to go only after the doctor had solemnly promised that he should have food prepared by one of the crew, and be permitted to leave, whether sick or well, when his ship cleared this port. Then he and the other sick man, who is an Egyptian, were taken to the Medico-Chirurgical Hospital. Not another Lascar could be induced to leave the ship. They have their own cook, who mixes the food on a square stone, mashes and boils it. Rice, teal, currie and water form the main part of their diet. Under an agreement between the Indian Steamship Association and the British gov-ernment better care is taken of the Indian than of English sailors. The Lascars ship under special and separate articles, which provide the kind of food they are to have, permit to worship as they please and stipulate warmer clothing and plenty of it in cold climates. Little meat is eaten, for

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FASHION NOTES.

Betterave, or beetroot, is the most fash-ionable of the many popular shades in red.

The new French swallowtail basque has two very long box pleats in the back, while in front it has a round zouave jacket-shape.

Vert sperenza is the new name of a fash-

ionable emerald-green shade that appears among brocades, shot taffetas, and fancy

Just at the moment ears are out of style. Pro tem. they are to be wholly concealed by heavy waves of hair in the fashion of other days, or hidden behind the short fuzzy, much-curled "cat-locks" now so gen-

erally and, as a rule, so unbecomingly af-

Velvet sleeves, with corselet to match, are

worn with plain cloth or silk faced waists

to be employed for guimpes and sleeves. Stylish house dresses are still made long,

but not long enough to be called trained, while full trains are only worn with the

The Princess May waist, which can be

fastened in the back, and which has a sur-

plice effect in front, is a pretty model for

dresses of plaid cheviot, serge or sacking for school girls. The skirt is in circular

form, and trimmed with rows of braid. Black trimmings are as fashionable for

Overskirts are more talked of than worn. Aside from the double or triple skirt and

the long coat skirt shaped like the gown

skirt beneath, there are not many over-skirts on the new models shown by the

best modistes and importers. Overskirts are simulated by trimming, and sometimes

a genuine overskirt is seen, usually quite

The number of handsome black costumes

worn upon the promenade is just at the

moment quite noticeable. These, as a rule,

are not somber in effect, being often of

very rich material and generally enlivened by a certain amount of color, introduced either into the bodice portion, the wrap or

hat. At receptions, matinees, etc., entire costumes of black velvet are worn, often

Sleeves are enormous, but continue to droop from the shoulders in a huge bell puff

at the elbow. One of the latest favorites

with leading modistes is an extremely full and very long muttonleg sleeve that after

being lined with a plain coat sleeve and sewed into the armhole, is arranged in

graceful "cascades," i. e., caught up in easy drapings here and there en jabot.

Among an array of elegant Parisian dresses sent over last week was one of

brocaded satin, showing a circular skirt

faced to above the knee with black velvet.

It was scalloped at the top, the scallops outlined with narrow jetted gimp. A hand-some black-cloth dress had a similar skirt.

Only fifteen inches of cloth showed on the

skirt, all the rest being velvet. To make

it less heavy, the cloth did not run the entire length of the skirt beneath its velvet

facing. The effect was that of a velvet skirt made with a black cloth yoke top.

Duties of a Housemaid.

If a maid is to be trained to take care of

a bedroom the following plan has been found to prove excellent: First open the windows and then carry out all the vessels

that require emptying; then hang up arti-

cles of wearing apparel, carry off soiled

clothing to the bags or hampers provided for them; lastly, take the bed clothing and

pillows near to the open window for airing. When there are a number of rooms to

place in order and time is valuable, one

after another should be treated in this way.

and the first room is aired and ready for

the next set of attentions; these are the

careful making of the bed, several turns

with the sweeper and nice dusting. A me-dium-sized room will require from thirty to

forty minutes for its proper order, so that

a mistress can determine just the time re-

quired for bedroom work-not a small mat-

ter in domestic affairs-which should be

reduced as far as possible to an exact sci-

ence. At night the maid should take from

the bed and fold neatly the covering in use during the day, and fold down the clothes, making the bed ready for occu-

pancy. An attractive way to do this is to

take the corners of the sheets, blankets

and quilts on each side, at the top, and fold them back till they meet in the center. If the gas is left lighted until bedtime be sure

that there is no draught to blow it out, no

curtains near by to be set on fire. Indeed,

New York Recorder.

This is called the chatelaine sleeve.

fected.

most elaborate toilets.

misses as for their elders.

long and but little looped.

with no color relief at all.

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ated at a safe distance from draperies of every kind. It is said that many fires in elegant houses occur for lack of this attention. Pitchers should be refilled, bowls emptied and stray articles should be put in place and the room otherwise tidied, then and richly plaided or striped goods continue it will be fit for fire, flood or sudden illness, unless its owner is unusually careless and disorderly. Teach a new maid to slip on a clean white apron when answering

> Always knock before entering a bedroom. To come upstairs for information; never Not to strike matches on the wall.

EXPENSIVE WORK.

Courtship and Marriage Cost \$35,000,-000 Annually in Britain.

Last year there was, according to the returns of the Registrar-general, 226,932 marriages in England and Wales. The returns from Scotland and Ireland bring it up to a total of more than 275,000 for the United Kingdom. Just consider the amount of money that must be spent in connection with 275,000 marriages, and the conclusions that follow have suggested a new train of thought to a contributor. It means, in the

first place, as many courtships What is the usual length of a courtship? That depends—like many other things. But, seeking a happy medium, we may fairly take eighteen months as an average. Say one-half of our sweet-hearting couples are so situated that letter writing becomes a necessity. Say they correspond with each other only once a fortnight, a calculation which must be far below the mark; put them on the moderate allowance of no more than two sheats of note paper, and we shall see the dainty collections of sweet nothings, amounting in the mass to a postal revenue of \$295,000, and a yearly stationer's bill of But these are very small items to think about. The jeweler will come in for a heavfer share of the profits. There will be 275,-000 wedding rings at a guinea apiece, and

engagement rings which we shall be well within the line in assessing at the same value. Then there are presents which the lover will naturally bestow upon the lady of his choice, ranging from the 15 000 bracelet of the duke to the shilling brooch of the coster. If we put them down with the rings at a guinea in each case, and credit them to the jeweler again, we shall have an account of nearly \$500,000. Then come the railroad companies. They must surely reap a golden harvest out of courting. With the inevitable trips and the traveling of separated sweehearts to see

one another, we may safely strike an average of \$15 for each courtship, which will give us a round sum of \$750,000. But all these are only preliminaries. The greatest expenditures will come with the wedding day. There is the trousseau, more or less costly, according to circumstances, for the bride, and at least a new suit for the bridegroom. It can be done cheaply enough, goodness knows, when bridal dresses are to be bought second-hand and top hats are obtainable "on the hire system." Finishing up the honeymoon we shall find another tolerable sum to be added to the costs of matrimony. Here there will certainly be diversion enough; every stage between the favorites of fortune who may flit luxuriantly through Europe for a year, and the daily laborer, whose idea of bliss is limited to a day off. If we accept \$25 as a reasonable average of so in moons, we have a final sum of \$1,250,000 to carry on our account. Thus, without speaking of furnishing and other preparations for married life, and confining our calculations only to the expenses of courtship and the honeymoon, we shall be within the mark in saying that the annual marriage census of the United Kingdom represents a total expenditure of \$35,000,000, a consideration which would certainly indicate that marriage is by no means a bad thing.

Roots make a cheap and excellent food for swine. Sweet potatoes, beets, turnips, carrots, etc., are hard to beat, either for every housekeeper should see that the gas jets are protected by globes and are situconvenience or economy.

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